



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Wiki Wiki News

Official Publication of the 25th National Veterans Golden Age Games

Saturday, May 28, 2011

www.veteransgoldenagegames.va.gov

Aloha! and other words to make you sound like a true Hawaiian

aloha — hello, good bye; compassion, love or sympathy

mahalo nui loa — thank you very much

kala — dollar, money

kaukau — food

inu — drink

kane — man

wahine — woman

kiki — child

koa — soldier

alaka'i — leader

kapu — sacred mele — song, sing

wiki wiki — quick

Outrigger Canoeing Exhibition

The 25th National Veterans Golden Age Games is excited to bring you the opportunity to join us in the Exhibition Event of Outrigger Canoeing this year. This event is the first time the sport has been offered in the history of the games.

Over the last hundred years, Outrigger Canoeing has evolved into one of Hawaii's most beloved pastimes and sports and will be introduced for the first time to our veteran athletes from across the country. In the Hawaiian language, Hoe Wa'a Mau means "paddle the canoe forward," which linked the Hawaiian culture with their ocean roots.

The Outrigger Canoe event is fun, safe and easily accessible for all Veterans regardless of age or physical condition. Outrigger canoes, unlike regular canoes, have support floats

attached to the hull to help prevent it from tipping.

Athletes in the outrigger canoeing community, including an adaptive paddling team, will be available to help Veterans in the waters off of the Hilton Hawaiian Village pier. The event will take place Saturday May 28 and Sunday May 29 at 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. each day. There may be opportunities to sign-up onsite if you have not previously registered.

Air Force Veteran is Up Early and On the Beach Practicing

Tourists gave her a rather odd looks, but Janet Escobedo didn't seem to notice at all as she rounded out and threw a 2.2 lb discus with all her might on the sunny beach.

"I'm a recreation therapist on the spinal cord unit at the Albuquerque VA," said Air Force Veteran Escobedo. "The last thing my guys said to me when I left was that I better not come back without a medal, so here I am, up at the crack of dawn sweating and practicing."

Escobedo served 20 years as an Air Force intelligence officer from 1977-1997, retiring as a lieutenant colonel. This is her first time competing at the NVGAG, although not her first time competing. In fact, in 1983, she competed in Berlin, Germany, at the Armed Forces Continental Sports Conference and won a Gold Medal for discus and even set a world record.

"That was a long time ago, though, and the Games have given me reason to work out and get back in shape. You know, I have to walk the talk if I'm going to convince paralyzed Veterans to get out there and exercise."

I'm really happy to be here, but most importantly, I really need to do my best. I don't want to let my Veterans down," she said.

Fun in the Sun

While in Hawaii you'll notice the sun always seems to be shining. To ensure you have a great and enjoyable time, please make sure you drink lots of fluid and wear sunscreen.

Water is by far the best form of hydration. Water should be consumed before, during and following any physical activity. Five points of dehydration are:

- Feeling thirsty
- When your mouth or skin feels dry
- Feeling tired
- When hungry (because thirst is often mistaken for hunger)
- Dark yellow urine (except first thing in the morning or if taking vitamins)

As to sunscreen, it is vitally important to take care of your skin. The increase in skin cancer is directly attributed to increased exposure to the sun. In addition, certain medications make it easier for a person's skin to burn. Sunscreen with protection of SPF 30 or higher is recommended.

Make sure you have a great time in Hawaii — drink plenty of water and wear plenty of sunscreen while you are out in the sun.

“The VA showed me love.”

Drafted at the tender age of 18, Army Veteran, Gordon Wallace, left his native home in Hawaii in 1970 to serve his country in Vietnam.

As one of 16 children, Wallace left school after the seventh grade to work in the family business. Education wasn't important for the boys. “The boys had to work to help feed the family,” said Wallace.

Uncle Sam gave him a job as a combat engineer. As a heavy equipment operator, Wallace built bridges, cleared roads, lead convoys with food, ammunition and whatever was needed to take care of the troops. Looking out in the distance, Wallace remembers the daily ambushes.

“I never felt love, even in my large family. The VA showed me love. They pulled me out of my shell. When I came back home, I really didn't come home. A big part of me stayed in Vietnam. I had trouble sleeping, was depressed and had trouble readjusting to life as I knew it.”

Wallace's counselor encouraged him to participate in the Games as another way to interact with Veterans who have shared similar experiences. “The camaraderie with other Vietnam Veterans has been a beautiful thing. We've shared our stories, the scary times, and we've helped each other just in the short time we've been here. I can finally smile again. What a joy to have come home,” said Wallace.

“I want to encourage everyone to enjoy our beautiful Honolulu. I am so happy to share our lifestyle and the island spirit with all my fellow Veterans.”

A Hawaiian Feast Fit for Veterans!

Throughout the world feasting has been and is a universal form of celebrating happy and important events. Today and Sunday, Veterans will get together with families and friends at a luau to celebrate the 25th National Veterans Golden Age Games in Honolulu, Hawaii.

A luau is a Hawaiian feast. The splendor and spirit of an ancient Hawaiian tradition will be kindled for this year's participants at the Hale Koa (House of Soldiers) Luau. As you enter the lush tropical garden, each guest will be welcomed with a lei and a tropical refreshing drink.

Music and demonstrations will keep you entertained prior to and during the dinner show. Experience an authentic imu (Hawaiian underground oven) ceremony followed by a bountiful feast of authentic local favorites. The menu will include various salads, native fruits, a sumptuous meat selection and delicious desserts.

Question of the Day:

What did you forget to pack in your suitcase?

Dorsey Nelson

Texas (Army)

I forgot to pack my underwear. Yes, I am wearing some now but I had to go buy it.

Ron “Moon” Walker

California (Air Force)

I actually overpacked but it doesn't matter. I am so jazzed. Horseshoes is my first event and these are my first games. I love it.

John Miller

Indiana (Air Force)

I'm in the horseshoe tournament and I forgot my horseshoes.

Nelden Ellison

California (Air Force)

I packed too much. I know I forgot something but I forgot what it was.

Federico Paz

California (Army)

I didn't forget anything. I actually overpacked.

Odds & Ends**NVGAG Medical Suite**

Available 24 hours May 28- June 1 at Hilton Hawaiian Village, Tapa Tower, Rooms 3329-3330. The NVGAG medical team will not be able to write new prescriptions for visiting athletes and will not write prescriptions for narcotics and other controlled drugs.

There is no regular VA hospital in Honolulu. Honolulu VA clinic hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. There will be one shuttle to and from the clinic per day which allows for a very quick visit and turnaround time.

Wheelchair & Prosthetics

Durable medical equipment, prosthetics, and wheelchair repair by Invacare. Located at Hilton Hawaiian Village, Tapa Tower 2nd floor, Iolani Suites 5-6. Available May 28-31 from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.; June 1 from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. From your Hilton hotel room dial 62063, or dial “o” and ask for extension 62063.

Note for Sunday Croquet

There are no food or drink vendors at the venue. Please make sure you bring lunch along with plenty of water to drink.

Shuttle Schedule

Boarding for shuttles takes place 15 minutes before times listed; departure from Tapa Tower Bus Depot.

Hawaii Convention Center Shuffleboard — 6:45 a.m.

Hawaii Convention Center Air Rifle — 10:45

Pearl Harbor — 8:00, 12:30 Punchbowl — 8:30 a.m.

Lost & Found

Hilton Tapa Tower, 2nd floor, Honolulu 1 room.